

short-term intervention without compromising the child's future character development; and how to shorten the time involved in assessment and treatment without compromising the role model one wishes to teach trainees are all real issues to struggle with. Underlying such questions is the basic one of what understanding is needed to promote the growth of a specific child and what is the most effective way of achieving it. I found most of the papers presented in this book stimulating and useful in approaching these issues.

Social Change and the Mental Health of Children. Joint Commission on Mental Health. New York: Harper & Row, 1973, 225 pp., \$10.00.

Reviewed by Jacqueline G. Etemad, M.D.

This volume combines two reports, the first and longer being that of the Task Force concerned with "Innovation and Social Progress in Relation to Mental Health of Children," and the second presenting excerpts from the report of the Committee on Children of Minority Groups.

Summary and recommendations are presented first, followed by the data on which the conclusions are based. In the first section, the Task Force places emphasis on the importance of the active involvement of youth at all levels from decision-making through implementation. It recommends extension of educational facilities both up and down the age scale, so as to provide universal nursery schools and universal opportunity for college education, the latter to include education for many technical and practical skills. Development of alternatives to institutional care is discussed, together with the development of comprehensive multiservice center models for mental health preventive services and delivery of care. The report discusses the education of professional child and youth workers, utilization and training of volunteers and paraprofessionals, and in-service training for parents. The needs for improvement in education, for development of guidelines for program maintenance and renewal, and for solutions to the "impending crises wrought by over-population" are noted, and a guaranteed income maintenance for the American family is recommended.

The Task Force then provides data on the condition of the poor in the affluent society, as well as a discussion of the children of the nonpoor, the "children of the American Dream." This section is a sourcebook of data on poverty and on such problem areas as juvenile delinquency, suicide, and drug use.

In the section called "Directions for Change," the Task Force recognizes many of the barriers to the recommended changes that can be antic-

ipated at the community level. The major question left untouched is the barrier to national implementation of a policy with liberal roots in a nation uncertain about its commitment to liberalism.

The report of the Committee on Children of Minority Groups identifies racism as the number one public health problem in America. After describing briefly the extent of the problem, the Committee urges a massive outpouring of resources and energies at all levels, and proposes a series of specific recommendations touching on various forms of affirmative action, educational efforts, improvements in delivery of services, housing, community participation, manpower training and employment, and community parent-child and child-rearing facilities. The Committee suggests that the time is ripe for action because "vast numbers of Americans appear ready to accept, either from egalitarian or humanistic motives or from simple self-interest, that the dangerous and destructive mechanisms of racism must be abandoned" (p. 189).

The plea is forceful, and many of the proposed interventions appear useful. One is left wondering, however, about the potential gap between proposal and implementation.

Families and Family Therapy. By Salvador Minuchin. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974, 268 pp., \$10.00.

Reviewed by Frank S. Williams, M.D.

Salvador Minuchin's latest contribution contains the best of the here-and-now transactional aspects of family therapy. For the experienced family therapist or psychodynamic psychotherapist, there is much of value in its beautifully clear, descriptive accounts of healthy, complex, and abnormal spousal, sibling, and parental subsystems within families. The seasoned therapist can readily empathize with the six chapter-length transcripts of actual family interviews, and glean much from both the unfolding clinical material and the author's remarks. I am concerned, however, about the possible effects of the book upon the unseasoned therapist, who may, on the one hand, try too quickly to identify with Minuchin's masterful director-of-the-scenario approach, and so possibly move too rapidly for the psychological readiness of the individual family members, or who may, on the other hand, feel overwhelmed at the prospect of having to learn how to implement clinical hunches in the way achieved by Minuchin.

The book begins with an exciting introduction to structural family therapy, relating man and his psyche to man's context and the fields around him. The chapter describing a clinical interaction between Mordecai Kaff-

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